



PUBLICATIONS

Educational Series • No. 14

A BLIND CHILD BECOMES A MEMBER OF YOUR CLASS

by
YSABEL JOHNSON

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street, New York 11, N. Y.



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New York

This pamphlet is one in a series of monographs issued from time to time by the American Foundation for the Blind in an attempt to disseminate information of projects carried out by the Foundation and on present-day services to blind persons. The monographs are classified according to subject into:

1. General Information
2. Preschool Series
3. Educational Series
4. Vocational Series
5. Research Series
6. Group Reports
7. Legislation Series
8. Studies in Community
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Foreword

The author of this monograph is a former resource teacher of blind children who for the present is devoting her time to caring for her own three small children. In time, when it seems practical, she expects to return to her work with blind children. She has written this text with the purpose in mind to be of help to the teacher who discovers that a blind child is enrolled in one of her classes.

The American Foundation for the Blind feels that the many practical suggestions incorporated in the manuscript will serve as guide-lines for anyone who is instrumental in planning the education of a blind child. Especially helpful are also the implications that sighted classmates may benefit equally with the blind child from being members of the same class.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Mrs. Johnson for her careful and well-planned work and her devotion to the education of blind children. It is a pleasure to publish this material.

M. ROBERT BARNETT
Executive Director

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Introduction to the Classroom Teacher

When you learned there was to be a blind child in your class you probably wondered how you would be able to manage the situation and why the child was not being placed in a residential school for blind children. A gradual development in educational philosophy has demonstrated that a blind child will benefit greatly from attending local public and private schools. One of the chief reasons for this development is the desire of parents to have their child at home where he can experience the warmth of family life and share in its realities. Through attendance at the neighborhood school the blind child develops and matures while sharing the same opportunities and challenges as his sighted schoolmates. Day by day living of sighted children with a blind child is one of the most effective means of breaking down misconceptions and prejudices about blindness.

In preparing a manual such as this it is difficult not to over-generalize or to oversimplify. What has been written is presented only by means of suggestion. What is said will probably not apply to all children nor to all teachers.

Children and adults very quickly perceive the effectiveness with which a blind child, with a minimum of special attention, can take his place as a successful and contributing member of the school and community life. In addition, the costs alone of maintaining large residential schools points to the wisdom of the establishment of good educational facilities in local areas.

This booklet was written to help acquaint you, the classroom teacher, with the idea of integrating a blind child into your class. This has been done by other classroom teachers, most of whom tell of their experiences with a sense of achievement and satisfaction. They feel this approach has been beneficial, not only to the blind child, but also to his sighted companions, including his teacher.

Your responsibility to the visually handicapped child in your group is the same as your responsibility to other pupils. You help them to develop physically, socially, intellectually, and morally. A teacher must take every child where he is and lead him as far as the limitations and potentialities of both the child and teacher permit.

Try to remember that if you are a good teacher for sighted children you can also be a good teacher for a blind child. Teaching and learning processes are fundamentally the same. Some adaptations will be necessary in methods and materials.

To help you with this aspect of having a blind child in your group, you will have the support not only of the administrator of the school program, but also of a resource teacher. This teacher may be located in your building, or in some instances an itinerant teacher will come to help you for certain scheduled hours each week. These specially prepared helpers will guide you and the visually handicapped child in the use of any special tools or techniques appropriate for his instruction.

The function of a resource teacher or the itinerant teacher is the same. The only difference is that the resource teacher has headquarters in a school where several blind children are enrolled, whereas the itinerant teacher serves different children placed in various schools within a certain area.

*Examples of Ways in which the Resource Teacher
or the Itinerant Teacher Will Help with
Special Needs in Your Classroom*

In fulfilling your responsibility to your class, the resource teacher or itinerant teacher may assist you with the blind child in your group in ways such as the ones listed below:

1. Supplying reading readiness help.
2. Providing in braille the necessary written and reading materials so that the blind child can follow your program.
3. Teaching the child how to find his way in the halls, on the stairs, to the restrooms, in the cafeteria, and on the play-

ground. This type of help is sometimes referred to as teaching skill in orientation and mobility, or mobility instruction.

4. Helping the child to learn how to use the playground equipment.
5. Suggesting indoor and outdoor games which the entire class can enjoy.
6. Helping to adapt lessons in arts and crafts.
7. Occasionally going along on field trips to help the child learn as much as possible from touch, smell, hearing, and even taste.
8. Working out a convenient system so that materials can be prepared, organized, and located so they will be readily available for the blind child's use in your class.
9. Guiding you in learning to know as much as possible about this child. Gradually with this assistance you can piece together parts of his "reactional biography." These are all the interactions of an individual with the world around him. Your resource or itinerant teacher is prepared to help you in interpreting these interactions in order that you can be most helpful and enjoy fully the blind student.
Loving and patient efforts of an understanding person may undo in the future what unwise treatment has wrought in the past.
10. Keeping in touch with local, state, and national resources which can serve your program from time to time.

Since there is more than one way to solve a problem, no doubt you and your helper will be exploring new approaches. The classroom teacher and the resource teacher or itinerant teacher, through their varied experiences and training, are often challenged to novel ideas, and to develop them creatively with mutual gain for teachers as well as children, both sighted and blind.

The resource or itinerant teacher will assist you in facing problems as they present themselves. The creative thinking, initiative, enthusiasm, and experience of the regular classroom teacher together with that of the specially trained teacher result in curricu-

lum and methods of procedure specifically adapted to the needs of the blind child.

This helping special teacher is qualified to aid you to see problems in their true perspective, no more nor less serious than they actually are. Together, with her suggestions and the support of the administrator of your school program, you will be able to work them through with surprising satisfaction.

*Regular Classroom Teachers
Who Have Had Experience
with Blind Children Say . . .*

Do not panic! The handicapped child adapts surprisingly well to circumstances as they arise and is eager and able to do most of the same things as the sighted children when given the opportunity.

If you are natural and relaxed, the child will develop in a natural and relaxed way.

A pat on the head or a gentle arm around the shoulder says a great deal to a blind child.

Help the child feel that he belongs to the class; but give him no special privileges.

A blind child can learn that lack of sight does not absolve him from the need for discipline.

Allow the blind child the opportunities to grow in independence just as you do other children. Before long the entire class will be talking about how proud they are of his developing skills.

The blind child may need special kinds of help. This is true of all children from the very slowest to the most gifted one.

Try to describe activities carefully and to be consistent in your directions since the blind child cannot see you. You will be happy to notice that your improved skill in giving directions and the children's attention to following oral directions will help the entire class.

Several teachers reported that often a child in the regular class who had many problems showed marked improvement in

his own social adjustment after working voluntarily with the blind child. This advantage was shared by the entire class.

The standards of grading should be the same for the blind child as for other children. Too much emphasis can be placed on blindness of the child rather than upon his other normal abilities.

Help the blind child to experiences which will bring to him a generous share of feelings of security and understanding, from yourself as well as from his sighted classmates. If you believe in any child, he will respond to your confidence in him.

You may be making your finest advances when appearances are least in your favor. Periods of growth and regression and then further growth are typical of all learning and of all children.

One teacher reports that the most important thing learned was the fact that having a blind child in a regular class was much easier than she had expected.

To have a blind child is a fine experience for you and your children. Relax and enjoy it.

Suggestions which Are Equally Advantageous to the Teacher of Blind and Sighted Children

Observance of children tells us that they learn much via the five senses. Good teachers make use of this principle, whether consciously or unconsciously, when they plan teaching presentations around the use of the various senses. An example of this is a first grade teacher of reading who combines teaching by sight, phonics, and kinesthetics.

Our senses are all avenues of thought. We should not minimize opportunities to use them. It is interesting to observe that some children learn better by appealing to their sense of touch while others may progress better through the avenue of hearing. This is similar, in a way, to making a meal appetizing by preparing food

tasty to the palate, with delightful aroma and interesting color, served in pleasant surroundings.

When a blind child is in your class, you and the sighted children will become more aware of the senses other than sight. Life is brimming with experiences which should challenge all senses.

However, many individuals fail to make maximum use of each of their senses and thus miss some of the depth and richness of the surrounding world. Japanese people are extraordinary in the ability they have developed to appreciate to the fullest the richness of their environment. For example, they actually form in groups and make a party centered around the simple pleasures of moon viewing, cherry blossom viewing, and insect listening.

The presence of a blind child may challenge you and your class to be "on your toes." He may encourage you to be precise in language as well as give accurate definitions.

Following are a few ideas and suggestions about ways to increase the use of our senses as channels of learning.

Touch

Try to imagine the amount of knowledge a blind person might gain in only one day by means of his sense of touch. If you think back you might surprise yourself by making a list of what you too have learned from use of this sense.

Let your students list various textures to be found in the classroom.

Girls' ribbons—satin or grosgrain
The feel of a window pane
The blackboard eraser
Rubber rain boots
Mr. Turtle's hard shell
Metal and plastic lunch boxes
Boys' trousers—denim, flannel, or corduroy

These might be discovered while exploring in the garden:

thorns on roses & blackberries
veins of the hydrangea leaf
rough bark of a plum tree
blades of grass
a metal faucet
a rubber hose
a wet worm
metal latch on the gate
sap oozing from a cherry tree
the grainy texture of zinnia
stamen

concrete of the bird bath
smooth petal of geraniums
thorny leaf of the holly
wire of the back fence
rough wood of the gate
design of the patio brick
water in the bird bath
smooth roundness of pyracan-
thus berries

Much can be done by working with shapes and textures. These items and many more could be used in activities such as making mobiles, collages or shadow boxes:

cones
seeds
fabrics

folia
wire
string

yarn
stones
sequins

To cuddle a warm, live, little hamster and feel its pulsating heart gives an idea of its whole being. A model or stuffed animal may teach size, texture, and form, but cannot substitute for the warmth of life.

*We often don't realize how much we
miss by relying so much on vision.*

Hearing

It is possible to be surrounded by a world of myriad sounds and to be conscious of only a few of them because our hearing tends to be passive. We should encourage creative listening. Even though our normal everyday environment is rich in sounds we must "tune in" to receive them.

Play with words. Let the children feel their mouths while speaking. Let them listen to rain, motor noises, and wind. Developing an acute sense of hearing is of great help in mobility training for the blind child.

Your class would enjoy the experience of endeavoring to recall sounds associated with various rooms in the house. It is surprising how many they will discover to add to the list.

Kitchen

toast popping up
bread wrapper
an egg beater
a can opener
hissing tea kettle

Bathroom

water in the sink
lid on laundry hamper
jiggle of the scale
flush of the toilet
buzz of the razor

Bedroom

light switch
clock
radio
shoes dropped
zipper on dress bag

Livingroom

crackle of fire
desk drawer
television
door bell
poker chips

A pleasant weekend in the open air gives opportunity to discover many interesting sounds out-of-doors:

lid of the garbage can
water from a garden hose
leaves in the wind
neighbor's baby
noon whistle
a barbecue fire

a train whistle
birds singing
cats fighting
the car motor
our dog
the back door

Try listening.

The more you listen, the more you hear!

Smell

In keeping with the practice of developing awareness through improved use of the senses, help your children to observe odors.

Do you recall these smells?

the earth after a rain	cedar in the closet
flowers in the garden	burning rubber
fresh fruit on a tree	cookies baking
salt air at the beach	vinegar
roasted coffee beans	mint
a favorite perfume	incense
our Christmas tree	new-mown hay
cleaning fluid	clean clothes
a freshly bathed baby	campfire breakfast bacon

Perhaps you would like to make two lists—one of pleasant odors and one of those which are unpleasant.

Taste

Wherever desirable and under hygienic conditions, children should be encouraged to taste as an avenue of gaining new concepts. As with the sense of smell, it helps to identify distinguishing qualities.

Taste and smell are closely connected in many instances. For example, the taste of an apple is largely traceable to its aroma. When speaking of flavor or taste, we usually think of the many, many kinds of foods, herbs, and drinks. For example:

gum	tobacco
glue	tooth paste
soap	honeysuckle
dirt	cough syrup
iodine	

How many can your children add to this list?

Ways to Help a Blind Child Feel Comfortable and Adequate

In unfamiliar places a blind child is most at ease walking with a friend, placing his hand lightly on the other child's arm at the elbow.

Let a blind child follow your lead. Never push him from behind.

In becoming acquainted with his new classroom the blind child will find it helps to have a few points of orientation, such as the sink or the door, and sound cues.

Allow the blind child to explore and find things for himself. Placing his hand here and there does not give him a total and meaningful orientation to surroundings.

Many Children Have Some Sight

Vision is a process which must be learned. Teachers can help those with some sight, no matter how little, to see what they are capable of seeing. In some cases vision is increased as it is practiced. Unfortunately, some individuals have vision of which they do not take advantage simply because they have not learned to use it.

Residual vision may be shown by *light perception*, *color perception*, or *object perception*. Many people have the misconception that if a person is blind he sees nothing at all. However, a legally blind (see page 24 for complete definition of legal blindness) person may still have some vision if he is taught how to use it. It is generally recognized that the use of whatever sight may remain does not impair or aggravate most eye conditions. It is interesting to note that many legally blind individuals can and do use print as their means of reading.

The child with *light perception* may be taught to use whatever he can see to help him to get about more adequately, comfortably, and with more self-assurance.

The child with *color perception* may not be able to draw a picture in much detail. Yet he will probably enjoy working with bright colored paper, looking at colored pictures, or experimenting with paints and chalks at the easel.

Children with *object perception* should be encouraged to make maximum use of whatever sight they may have by giving them attractive materials, by providing comfortable lighting, and by initiating reasons for using that sight which the children understand. As in the case of a child with color perception, you might experiment in using kaleidoscopes, pictures of various sizes and colors, or colored paper.

Use of Color Words

Although we cannot know what concepts a blind person may have about the names of colors, we can help him develop a feeling and association about color words. Blind individuals are surrounded by people using color words. Although they cannot see the colors, they may develop an awareness of how others feel about colors and how color words are used.

Fire is red and hot
Water is blue and cool
Pink is feminine and soft

It is a good idea to compliment a blind child when he wears a color which is particularly suitable to him. He should learn to know the pleasure which a good appearance makes to himself and to his sighted companions.

Use of Mental Conceptions of Surroundings

Try to help the blind child to build a mental concept of his surroundings. This mental picture, however, need not necessarily be in our own visual terms, but in terms which are meaningful to the child. Sometimes he reveals how things appear to him by making models in clay. Art work may show which parts of a total im-

pression are most important to him and which parts are less meaningful. The blind child, for example, may express himself in terms of how the touch of things appear to him. It would seem odd for him to speak of the reflection of moonlight on rippling water, whereas he might discuss the ripple of a pattern of brickwork on a garden wall.

Behavior Which May Indicate Insecurity

When you see unusual behavior in a blind child such as moving his hands before his face, rocking to and fro, or turning away when he talks, you are witnessing some forms of insecurity. You may want to discuss this behavior with the resource or itinerant teacher. There are various theories about the possible origin of such behavior, but in general, if there is no other obvious difficulty and when the environment becomes more interesting to the child, such actions tend to disappear.

To correct such behavior, direct the child's energy into other kinds of challenging activities in which he feels adequate. These activities provide a new interest and distraction from the stimulation the child gets from the various types of behavior described.

A Sixth Sense

There are individuals who tend to believe that blind people have a sixth sense, providential compensation, or extraordinary talent. Usually a combination of hard work, the cultivation of a good memory, and the development of latent natural faculties permit some blind people to function very well. The "sixth sense" is a poetic phrase having no foundation in truth.

The Use of Braille

All people have certain tools, such as printed books, which help them to learn and to communicate. Although blind children cannot see to use print they are most fortunate to have their own tool and method of communication which is known as braille. (See page 24 for detailed explanation.)

Braille is adaptable for use in reading, writing, mathematics, music, foreign languages, and science. The classroom teacher need not learn braille herself, but she should be able to interpret its function to the class. The resource teacher or itinerant teacher will instruct the blind child in the use of braille.

Some blind persons and even relatives of blind persons tend to avoid braille because of its association with lack of sight. As a teacher you can show respect for this tool and interpret it to the class as a very useful method of communication.

Show it off to all the children. Some sighted children enjoy it as a secret code.

All children like name tags on their desks, lockers, or coat hangers in print and braille.

Valentines signed by a blind child in braille are just a little special and always fun for the sighted children to show at home.

Braille labels and signs in the room attract the attention of all children. So do braille calendars, clock faces, rulers, scales, and thermometers.

The Importance of Reading Readiness

Some classroom teachers tend to be concerned and even fearful at the thought of having a student who will be reading in braille. Actually, braille is only a tool, as is print. What really matters is a sound foundation for reading which includes the development of an expanding vocabulary, a store of varied experiences, the ability to enjoy stories and to express oneself clearly. If a blind child has this kind of background he will progress in reading as does the sighted child with a similar preparation.

Reading is primarily a thinking process involving language meanings. It is not the media (print or braille), which is important, but rather the mental processes of learning.

Although the blind child will read in braille, his reading readiness needs are similar to those of all children. The following list gives some ideas of activities which are useful in preparing children to read.

meaningful experiences
following directions
vocabulary building
grouping and sorting
amateur performances
gift tags in braille
labels on exhibits
like and different
experience charts
soft and hard
working independently

loud and soft
big and little
left to right
matching
phonics
story time
dramatic play
greeting cards
dramatization
size and shape
dull and sharp

Encourage blind children to have their own books for pleasure reading just as sighted children do. A selection of brailled books may be included in the library.

Stories may be reread for pleasure or acted out. Dramatic play makes them come alive. Children love it!

Rhythms Are Especially Helpful

Rhythms, rhymes, puns and play with words are fun and at the same time are useful in teaching concepts to all children. Here are some ideas to try with your class.

hop	up	low	in	trot	crouch
leap	pull	slow	run	push	bounce
bend	down	long	out	fast	stretch
wave	loud	high	skip	slide	zig-zag
kneel	soft	short	roll	swing	collapse

The blind child may enjoy and learn from joining in folk dancing.

Indoor Games Are Fun and also Teaching-Learning Tools

Much of the ability to read depends on ability to hear, define, and use various sounds. Below are a few games which help your children develop their ability to hear and their awareness to listen.

Play *Echo* by letting a child tap four or five times. Another child across the room echoes back more softly in the same sequence of taps.

Children's attention may be directed to timbre of sound by having them identify a variety of sounds. Have one child stand behind a screen and:

use a pencil sharpener
crush a piece of paper
pour water in a glass
turn an egg beater
sweep with a broom
splash some water
rattle some keys
unwrap a present
shake a rattle

clap his hands
blow a whistle
strike a match
hammer a nail
saw some wood
open a drawer
pop a balloon
toot a horn
ring a bell

In addition to learning to become aware of sound, children enjoy sounds which can be acted out, thus giving them an enrichment of meaningful vocabulary to be used in other aspects of language.

Encourage use of *descriptive words!*

whir	hiss	squeak	buzz	groan	clink
swish	bang	rattle	rumble	squeal	hiss
snort	click	murmur	gurgle	whine	howl
crush	creep	chuckle	meander	growl	grunt
rumble	roar	shudder	whistle	twang	trickle

Children like to play—*Name That Tune!*

Another game with big possibilities is—*Who Said It?* which emphasizes the discrimination of voice timbre. Four or five children stand in a row before the other children who cover their eyes. The teacher touches one child in the row who says "How do you do?" The class uncover their eyes and guess *Who Said It?* Sometimes much giggling is prompted by the attempt of a child to change and disguise his voice.

Suggestions for your game table, to be used by the class.

anagrams
bingo
checkers
chess

dominoes
playing cards
scrabble

All are available with braille characters and/or indentations.

Your resource teacher can adapt many games, such as Lotto and other reading games, for use by the blind with the sighted child.

Playground Activities Are Important too!

A number of suggestions have been made for indoor games. You and your resource or itinerant teacher will adapt many of the usual games by methods such as using sighted partners, following the sound of a bell, and clapping hands. In the lower grades there has been little difficulty including the blind child in the games.

Some of the upper grade physical education presents more of a challenge, since there will be certain activities which are not suitable for blind children. There are games such as basketball, tennis, and football in which they cannot enter for competition. However, they may partake of most games for fun. For instance, the blind child can join in various ball games where the use of sound can enable the child to participate. It is important that he have a basic understanding of popular sports and understand their terminology. Blind people do enjoy following the World Series, football games and other sports events on television and radio. This will be of social value in discussing sports, a frequent topic of conversation.

To appoint the blind child as score-keeper or equipment custodian does provide him with a mental exercise, but not with physical education. He may enjoy this activity, but should not feel that his physical education will be so restricted.

Try to determine the blind child's physical needs such as development of larger muscles, better balance, and even gait, ability to run and skip freely, and to correct posture. There will be sighted

children who share some of the same needs, and these children may have their *physical education* together in such activities as using rings, trapeze, ladders, balancing boards, jungle gyms, and gym horses; and in doing tumbling, team stunts such as building pyramids and weight lifting. Although usually not possible on school grounds, bowling, swimming, roller skating, ice skating, and wrestling are favorable sports in which blind and sighted can participate together.

These are only suggestions of types of activities. The important thing is that the blind child is able to fulfill some of his own physical needs.

The Blind Child and his Schoolmates

Teachers about to have a blind child in class usually ask how to prepare the other children for the coming of this child. Let us remember that each child and situation differs so that it is unwise to make general statements as to how to cover specific situations.

However, many teachers who have had experience in teaching blind and sighted children together feel it better to begin school by calling no attention to the fact that one of the children in class is blind anymore than she would point out that one child has red hair or a Swedish name. Later, however, should the blind child be absent or out of the room, she might hold a little discussion in which she guides the class to realize that although the blind child cannot see, he can participate in most activities. Many things will be difficult for him, but few will be impossible. The teacher can point out how the blind child achieves the same goals by using different means.

Children can easily be made to realize that we are all different. Some have difficulty with arithmetic, others in sports, some in reading or singing. There are children with a crippled leg, poor hearing or a weak heart. What is important is that each of us tries to do his best.

The teacher now has an opportunity to make positive use of an unfortunate situation by enabling the children to see for themselves that everyone is endowed with different gifts. It is best to be

thankful for what we have and make the fullest use of our abilities.

All children can learn from their relationships with those who are handicapped. It is the able teacher who makes the presence of a blind child an advantage rather than a disadvantage as she works with her students throughout the year.

Maximum Use of Time and Circumstances

Keeping Children Active

All children must learn to make proper use of their time if they are going to satisfactorily increase their progress and development. Try to find avenues to keep the blind child active physically and mentally. A blind child has as much to learn, and the ability to learn as well as the same amount of curiosity as other children when he is given appropriate opportunities.

Encourage Exploration

Encourage the blind child to move about. He can develop his natural inclination to explore and to learn. Your guidance can nurture such inclinations.

Have interesting things about that will make a visually-handicapped child curious and wish to move about. These may include:

A science table

The week's cafeteria menu

Pets such as a turtle, hamster, or a mouse

A new braille book with an intriguing cover on the library table

Special notices on the bulletin board which change frequently

Blind children also like to share in classroom responsibilities and try things for themselves. They may contribute by:

helping put away equipment
suggesting songs to sing
leading the flag salute
making weather reports
watering the plants

emptying waste baskets
sharpening pencils
passing paper
going on errands
dusting
caring for pets

Much Learning can be Gained through Play

Let children see a reason for doing things. Many times suggestions can be developed through games. Rather than having a young child stringing beads aimlessly, why not let him learn the parts of a percolator, make something with hammer and nails, construct a building with blocks, or even prepare a cake or some jello. Playing with dolls gives practice in dressing and using snaps, buttons, and zippers. Children enjoy paint, clay, water and sand—they like to take apart and put together.

This list of *after-school* activities of some blind children gives an idea of the range of interests these children pursue.

scouting
sewing
rowing
swimming
Brownies

wrestling
bicycling
ice skating
music lessons
Sunday School

roller skating
French lessons
neighborhood play
horseback lessons
radio transmission

Some communities have part-time work programs designed to assist older students find suitable employment.

* * *

When first teaching a blind child you may probably be more concerned about the fact that he cannot see than about anything else. At this time his blindness may be, to you, his most distinguishing characteristic.

In teaching your class and becoming acquainted with the ways

of each child you will observe and try various methods and approaches. During the course of the school year you will have times when you will be discouraged, amused, saddened, or puzzled over apparent stand-stills, or cheered by sudden progress. Is this not true for all teachers of all children?

As you live day by day with a blind child you will gradually come to feel that child development and the basic learning processes are the same for him as for all children. As you come to know this child better, the importance attributed to the fact that he cannot see will gradually lessen. You will come to see his other characteristics and know his individual personality. Then you will begin to realize that this is just another child who happens to be blind.

Legal Definition of Blindness

Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or peripheral field so contracted that the widest diameter of such field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.

The Braille Alphabet

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
•	⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠
k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠
u	v	w	x	y	z	Capital Sign (dot 6)			
⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠				

Numbers

Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
Sign	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Punctuation

,	;	:	.	!	(	)	?	-	,	"	"
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

The six dots of the Braille cell are arranged and numbered thus:

1	•	•	4
2	•	•	5
3	•	•	6

With them a total of 258 distinct characters and word signs are possible. These six dots in the braille system are adaptable to and, therefore, used in any language having an alphabet. From them are formed complete literary, mathematical, chemical and musical codes. Braille is printed in Grades 1 and 2, depending upon the degree of contraction.

Teaching Aids Used with Blind Children

There are various sources and types of equipment which may be useful in teaching blind children. As the child reaches various stages of learning different items will be appropriate and helpful. Your specially trained teacher will help you to know when and which to use. So that you may know what is available for present and future use, a list of teaching aids is given. You may think of ways to use these which will help in teaching all of your pupils.

Writing Equipment

Braillewriter. The braillewriter resembles a typewriter with six keys used to produce the six raised dots which form the basic braille cell. Blind children should have use of such a machine for all writings throughout the first three or four grades.

Braille Slate and Stylus. The slate is a two-layer metal frame about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and is covered with little box-like slots or cells, each with six holes. Paper is placed inside the slate which opens like a book. The dots are pricked by placing the metal stylus in the appropriate holes. Children usually do not learn this method of writing until about the 3rd or 4th grade or after they are well acquainted with writing on a braillewriter.

Typewriter. In about the 4th or 5th grade children begin to learn to use the typewriter. This makes it very simple for the classroom teacher to correct their work. As in use of the braillewriter, children should become accustomed to writing on different models.

Mathematics Equipment

Objects. Various objects such as buttons, blocks, and clothes pins may be used in teaching fundamentals of number lessons in the primary grades.

Braille Dominoes. Some teachers have found these useful, not only as a means of recreation, but also as a tool for teaching number combinations.

Flash Cards and Number Games. The resource teacher can easily take the regular flash and number games used by a sighted class and add the braille equivalent so that blind and sighted children can use them together in the same class.

Arithmetic Slates. These are rectangular boards, usually of plastic which resemble a waffle. Cubes with standard braille numerals on five sides, which enable one to set down any of the ten number symbols, are supplied to fit into the rectangular openings.

Abacus. These are the same frames with rows of counters that have been used in the Orient for centuries. They can be used with blind and sighted children in developing a simple, basic understanding of numbers. Reasoning instead of rote memory is brought into play. Some Orientals who have always used the abacus can compute more quickly with it than by machine.

Judy Clock. Most primary teachers have these wooden clocks, which simulate the motion of real clocks, for teaching time to sighted children. Large gears move when the minute hand is turned. The minute hand must go around one full turn to make the hour hand go from one number to the next. To adapt these clocks for use of the blind child, just paste on tabs with braille numbers one to twelve so he can learn the position of these numbers on the clock face.

(When their blind child begins to be interested in telling time, some parents like to order a braille watch for Christmas or a birthday gift.)

Audio Aids and Reading Materials

Talking Book Reproducers. There are actually four speeds, 16 $\frac{2}{3}$, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, 45 and 78 RPM, phonographs which may be borrowed together with talking books (books which are read and preserved in the form of records).

Recorders. The four best-known of these machines which use thin, inexpensive, plastic discs are Audiograph, Dictaphone, Ediphone and Soundscriber. Soundscriber has special appeal since its records may be placed with some success on talking book machines and on many LP record players. These machines

provide ease of operation, low cost discs, and make permanent private recorded libraries feasible.

Braille Books and Talking Books. Many books are available from the American Printing House for the Blind which publishes an up-to-date catalog of available materials; or from your resource or itinerant teacher, who may secure materials from volunteer recording groups who make current material both for school work and for leisure time reading.

Tape Recorders and Plastic Disc Recorders. These machines on which recording is done magnetically on paper or plastic tape, or discs have many uses in the classroom both for the sighted and the blind children.

Headphones. If it is desirable for one or two to work individually and not disturb the rest of the class, headphones may be obtained for use with talking books and tape recorders.

Source Information. The Division for the Blind, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D. C., or your resource teacher will provide addresses of talking book machine lending agencies as well as the thirty-one regional libraries which distribute books for the blind.

When blind children register with regional libraries they will automatically receive the *Braille Book Review* and the *Talking Book Topics* which list all new material in the libraries.

Social Studies

Among the myriad aids which might be employed in connection with social studies are embossed maps and globes. Some very good ones have been made by resource or itinerant teachers for individual class units.

Bibliography

Many classroom teachers who have blind children have learned from and enjoyed reading some of the following. Your resource or itinerant teacher will be able to direct you to a copy of:

Albe, Georgie Lee, Compiler. *Resources for Teachers of Blind with Sighted Children*. New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1957.

A fifty-eight page manual with descriptions and sources of the principal devices and equipment used in the education of blind children.

American Foundation for the Blind. *Itinerant Teaching Service for Blind Children*. New York, 1956.

A detailed summary of itinerant teaching service for blind children in the United States which discusses the teacher and his functions, provision and distribution of books, equipment and supplies, placement of the child, and administration of itinerant programs.

Amrein, Polly. *The Blind Child in Your Kindergarten*. San Carlos, California, Paragon Press, 1959.

A seventeen-page handbook to be given as part of orientation to the kindergarten teacher about to have a blind child in her class for the first time. A great deal of serious truth, encouragement, and support presented in a cheerful, light, but reassuring style.

Hall, Margaret M. "The Blind Child in Kindergarten." *New Outlook for the Blind*, LV(January, 1961), 11-16.

As a result of her own experience the author not only illustrates with positive examples how the kindergarten curriculum may be presented to a blind child in a sighted class, but she also sets forth what she chooses to call the "ten commandments" in teaching the handicapped child.

Henderson, Florence G. *Structure and Function of the Eye, A Handbook for Nurses and Teachers*. San Francisco, The Gutenberg Press, 1957.

This handbook for teachers, written in terms for the layman, explains the function of the eye and discusses diseases and defects of the eye.

Henderson, Florence G. "Understanding Our Limitations in a Functional Education for Blind Children." *New Outlook for the Blind*, XLVIII (December, 1954). 347-53.

This is a discussion of the needs of blind children and the ways in which they learn. Attention is given to better use of the senses other than vision.

Kenmore, Jeanne Rice. "Enrichment of the Primary Reading Program in the Resource Room," *New Outlook for the Blind*, LI (February, 1957). 56-64.

The report of an experienced teacher on methods by which she was successful in teaching primary children to love reading. Main points: materials used, teaching basic skills, encouragement of creative thinking.

Krebs, C. Roselyn. "The Blind Child in Kindergarten." *New Outlook for the Blind*, LV (January, 1961), 8-10.

In this article the author discusses preparation of the blind child for school, the use of volunteer help, field trips, home visits, reaction of sighted children to blind children, and preparation of materials. This teacher feels that integration begun in kindergarten will continue as children mature and become contributing members of society.

Lowenfeld, Berthold. *Our Blind Children*. Springfield, Illinois. Charles C Thomas and Co., 1956.

Written primarily for the parents of blind children but contains a wealth of information which would be useful to teachers and others who guide parents and their children.

Manshardt, Clarice E. "The Role of the Public School System in the Education of Blind with Sighted Children," in *Concerning the Education of Blind Children*. Compiled by Georgie Lee Abel, (New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1959).

A short but concise discussion of the responsibility of public schools to educate children who are blind as well as other children, with a brief history of the development of the integrated program.

Misbach, Dorothy. "A Reading Program for Little Blind Children," *New Outlook for the Blind*, XLVIII (September, 1954), 218-22.

A discussion of reading readiness activities and suggestions for materials and methods that might be used with blind children.

Norris, Miriam; Patricia J. Spaulding; and Fern H. Brodie. *Blindness in Children*. University of Chicago Press, 1957.

The report of a five year longitudinal study whose main conclu-

sion was that the manner in which the parents and community respond to blindness has the greatest importance in determining the probable outcome of the child's development.

Pelone, Anthony J. *Helping the Visually Handicapped Child in a Regular Class*. New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1959.

A ninety-nine page monograph in which the author presents in concise form practical information to help teachers, administrators, psychologists, counselors and nurses in working with visually handicapped children who are placed in a regular class.

Spencer, Marietta B. *Blind Children in Family and Community*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1960.

In this beautifully organized book the author, a medical social worker, explains in concise paragraphs illustrated by photographs of preschool children in situations common to all children, how basic principles of child guidance can be applied to blind children. This is the type of book which would be helpful to anyone concerned in any way with blind children.

Vance, Marguerite. *Windows for Rosemary*. New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1956.

This is a short book with illustrations in which a nine-year-old blind child describes the celebration of her birthday with her family and friends during a stay at the ocean. It might be good to read this kind of story to sighted children to help them develop a better understanding of a blind child.



